No. 13

Attacks on Jews and Judaism

A DISCOURSE

BY

EMIL G. HIRSCH

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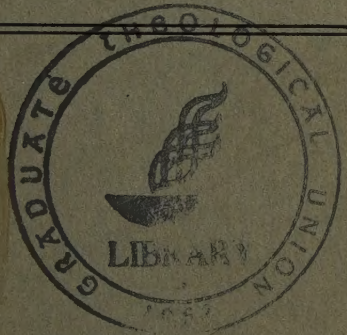

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"ATTACKS ON JEWS AND JUDAISM."

Lesson: Chap. iii., Book of Esther

It is not the fault of the Jew that the old oriental tale incorporated in the literature of the ancient Hebrews, about Esther and Mordecai, retains its pathetic interest. Thirty years ago there were those among us who honestly and openly were of the opinion that the day was not far distant when Israel would learn to forget the story of his persecution. But the assurance then treasured has been rudely dispelled. As in dark medieval days, so in these light flooded years of a new century, the cry is heard on all sides echoing the complaint and accusation of the old Persian vizier, that the Jew is a stranger in the lands where he has been given hospitality; that he pursues aims and ambitions distinctly and viciously his own, employing methods that are hostile to the welfare of the people in the midst of whom he dwells. The new age seems to have discovered many a new truth, but alas! not enough of truth to correct the old misconceptions to which the Jew has been exposed and of which he has been the victim ever since he made his first bow on the stage of time. No new indictment has been drawn; no new count has been added to the old bill. In whatever modern language the charge is phrased it carries the old burden, it reiterates the familiar accusation. In view of this constancy of prejudice, it behooves the Jew every year anew on those days when fiction or

memory speaks to him of persecution baffled and of hatred thwarted, to probe to the roots these wearisome and worrying misconceptions, to analyze the reasons of this universal misjudgment; to examine into his own conduct; to verify his own attitude. If there be in his own character that which calls for amendment it is his duty to set about remedying the defect. But if, upon investigation calm and dispassionate, the conclusion is forced upon him that his is not the blame, that what the world calls his stubbornness is really his fidelity in the service of higher ideals, the memory which speaks to him of conflicts erst won will be an incitement for him all the more to strengthen the foundations of his faith, to draw from the lessons of the past new vigor and virility for the contest wrathfully raging in the present. To this purpose I would have you dedicate with me the ensuing hour.

The old yet ever new accusations against the Jew may be grouped under four distinct heads. Each caption indicates an impelling error, which suggests in the minds of such as host the prejudice, the workings through the Jew of forces inimical to the best interests and the holiest intensities of the higher humanities. Time will not permit me to deal with all four; but the two that more than the others are in the forefront of attention I ask permission to present. The first source of prejudice against the Jew is a quasi scientific theory of racial distinctions. That the Jew constitutes a distinct race is the certainty cherished by his enemies. Less emphasis used to be laid on the distinctness of the racial qualities of the Jew in former days. That this element of prejudice has become very prominent in these later times is clearly the concomitant of the new philosophy claiming to be based upon natural sciences,

which has cast an unholy spell over historians and statesmen. Far be it from me to discredit the great achievements wrought by the young sciences busy with the secrets of the heavens and earth. If the latter half of the nineteenth century is aureoled in glory, the lustre came as a reward of assiduous court paid by master minds to the coy genius of nature. Our marvelous perfection in technical control over the resources of soil and sea, is clearly the outcome of our deeper intimacy with the world-building energies sweeping through eternity. But in the wake of this victory over reluctant Nature, has arisen a philosophy which robs man of the regal crown. Under the passion for unity which is characteristic of the bent of mind anxious to uncurtain the arcana of nature, the thought leapt out in fatal fury that mud was equal to mind, and man of one destiny as were the microbes. Men gloated over and gloried in the kinship thus established between the human and the animal. And out of this mood sprang the vitality of the idea that race is a determinant of the humanities. In the flush tide of joy at having discovered a principle to establish the relative ranking of the various and varied components of the human family, the prophets of the race Shibboleth overlooked that in strict scientific parliance race was vague and indefinite. This very lack of precision made the Fetish all the more popular. Historians and politicians proclaimed the new divinity and invoked it to lend dignity to their analysis of the moving impulses underlying the achievements of past time as well as the ambitions still aflame to reconstruct the map of the world. Materialism had contended that thought depended upon cerebral chemistry. Character now was declared to be the precipitate of blood qualities.

To the undoing of the true bond of humanity this notion of racial distinctions was called to the witness stand. Recrudescence of hatred fanned into a consuming flame withering tenderer flowers of sentiment and drying up the springs of sympathy marked the spread of the fateful creed. Blood decides quality, blood assigns rank in the human family. So ran its destructive insistence. Small wonder that the emphasis so beautifully put in the opening chapters of Genesis, on the unity of the race, was speedily blurred. Racial lines mark men as belonging to different groups. This uncertain note of the great anthropologists smaller men twisted into the assertion that these vague distinctions settled the question of the relative superiority or inferiority of the sons of man. Soon the Aryan was heard declaiming that his blood marked him the predestined leader of all mankind. To this conceit of the predestined superiority of the Aryan the re-rise of distrust against the Jew must be traced. The Jew of course may not boast of Aryan blood. The theory declares him to be a Semite. What matter that this thesis is open to serious doubt? Has passion ever weighed reason or evidence? But let for argument's sake the position be conceded. Is the further conclusion justified that because of different blood the Jew is the inferior of his Aryan co-tenant of earth? Stronger proof were needed than the hypothesis offers to substantiate the insistence. Still this Aryan conceit found willing acceptance and violent expression especially in Germany. In that land, once the glorious home of Kant and Lessing, to-day anthropology is cited into court to justify treason to all that Kant held holy and Lessing proclaimed. Formerly and elsewhere anthropology was content to register differences

in color, stature, and physiognomy observed among men. Or anthropology collected information concerning the habitat, the mental conceits, the religious notions of the various components of the human race. But to-day from being a descriptive science, anthropology is forced to assume the role of a normative regulator. The latest book on anthropology to make a stir, is entitled "Political Anthropology." To race qualifications are traced by this new branch of the science of anthropology capability for self government and predisposition for slavery. If in certain sections of the world political initiative is found to be active this political anthropologist ascribes this to the racial constitution of the inhabitants. Where on the other hand, this power of political self-determination is found absent, distinction of race is pressed into service to explain the difference. Formerly, you remember, climate, topography, the configuration of the land, the proximity of the sea, the height of mountains, the depression of valleys used to figure in the equation of political capacity or its reverse. But this theory advanced by Buckle and others has now entirely been crowded to the rear; no longer are the mountains invoked; nor are the meads brought forward; no longer is influence credited to stars, or to storms, to seas or to rivers. Blood alone is given the right to account for distinctions of mind, of morality, of political sagacity or political incompetence. Only the Aryan race, these new anthropologists tell us, is capacitated by blood for the progressive work of subjugating nature. All other races are fated to passivity. And among these that lack the initiative genius, the Semite again by his blood is gifted to draw profit unearned from the hard labor, the inventive ingenuity of the Aryan race. From this ingenious theory

the conclusion is drawn that the Aryans are by God, or by nature, appointed the rulers, while the Semites are marked in the laboratory of nature herself as dangerous to progress, a dissolving element against which precautions must be taken.

From the contiguity and contact of unequal races perils arise for the race of superior quality. Admixture of baser blood is to be apprehended. For the effect of such intermingling always has been the deteriorating of the quality of the original superior race. To prevent this uncanny eventuality must therefore be the concern of wise statescraft. Miscegenation will prove the deathblow to original inventiveness and capacity only vested in the pure stock. The Semite being of inferior blood his presence among the Aryan peoples is a grave menace. Hence, prudence would suggest that the Semite must be removed; and where this is impossible, that he must be placed under such restrictions as will under the play and sweep of natural causes tend to make his extermination an assured fact a few centuries hence.

This has been the program of political reactionary parties in Germany for many a century. Now it struts forth in the plumage of a scientific theory. It has met with willing acceptance by men of the Plehve type, the modern Haman's of Russia. Yea, a few years ago the jargon of this quasi scientific conviction found the French people in a receptive mood; if then to our consternation even France was on the point of forgetting her glorious traditions and memories, the sad phenomenon is sufficiently accounted for by the havoc wrought directly and otherwise by this pseudo-scientific doctrine which makes race the determinant of human values

In the face of this prejudice it is easy to see how futile the means are employed by some cowardly Jews to escape being touched by its breath. Mind you, it is race that determines superiority and inferiority. One cannot correct his race. Baptism will not wash away the stain of the inferior blood; change of name will not modify the quality of the life elixir. Political creed is ineffective as well. Blood is the decisive element, and it is constant. Even intermarriage will not help the matter, for according to this anthropology, the superior race is impotent to lift the inferior to its heights. Wherever the inferior race is allowed to intermingle with its better, the nature of the superior component is affected for the worse. Mix white and black, the result is not a better white, a nobler black, but a despicable Mulatto, who exhibits, so they say, all the evil qualities of his progenitors, to the elimination even of the possible factors of strength originally within the grasp of the inferior partner to this unholy union. Allow Aryan and Semite to mix; the Aryan loses and the Semite cannot gain. Hence it is essential that the modern Aryan be on his guard against the insidious attacks planned and plotted by the Semites, who would open wide the doors to the undoing of the Aryans by choosing wives or husbands from the nobler stock.

This consistent Aryan brutalism is without equivocation avowed by a large portion of modern German and European anti-Semites. They have maintained it in parliament, and emphasized it from public platforms, that the baptized Jew is still a Jew; they have proclaimed it in parliament, and have importuned the public authorities to act upon their protest, that the descendant of a mixed marriage one of whose parents is a Semite and the other an Aryan, shall not be cred-

ited with Aryan distinction, but be rated and ranked with the inferior Semites. It must be admitted that the logic of this demand cannot be disputed as soon as the chief premise is conceded. The theory itself has, especially during the last four years, gained many adherents, largely because a very fascinating book, written seemingly in a purely scientific spirit, has unsettled opinions and weakened doubts. I refer to the famous—or shall I say, infamous?—work by Houston Stewart Chamberlain, "The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century." In it Chamberlain operates with a free hand with the concepts of modern anthropology. While convinced that certain Aryans are predestined for excellence, he would qualify materially the scope of the general thesis. For this universal Aryanism would include many races or nations that, according to his Teutonic chauvinism, should be denied the glory of the foreordination. He modifies, therefore, the Aryanism of this modern school of anthropologists by introducing a new terminology and a new principle of selection. His predestined group he denominates the Germanic-Celtic race. To it he ascribes every act of which history has recorded the beneficial influence, making for advancement, for liberty, for civilization. This Germanic-Celtic aggregate he rates as the one factor and force in every movement upward, in science, religion, culture, commerce, industry and what not. He would have his "chosen people" be on their guards against the Semite, who will, unless checked, vitiate the blood, and thus will bring to an inglorious end the rise of mankind conditioned on preserving in absolute purity this stock of energetic men of toil, of inventors, pioneers, of men who have changed the surface of the earth and snatched, Prometheus like, from the stars the vital

spark of life and thought. Houston Stewart Chamberlain would not have had so many readers, and would have not found such ready credence had not the erratic genius on the throne of Germany found in the words and contentions of this Englishman writing in German a note quivering in harmony with a predisposition of his own. The German emperor made the curious book popular. Purchasing a number of copies, he presented them, with his autograph dedication, to his cronies. I am surprised that a certain American set has not yet made the book their newest fetish; for no American has been admitted into the august presence of the German emperor during the last few years, but was presented with a copy. I am prepared to hear that our Women's Clubs will have classes, to study Houston Stewart Chamberlain's book. Perhaps they are waiting till an English translation appears; but as the book is very bulky it is not likely that an English publishing house will venture on the enterprise. Still the moment it is translated into English we may make ready for its echoes from both orthodox and liberal pulpits. The likelihood is strong that then here by a certain ilk it will be dinned into our ears that the Germanic-Celtic forces have carried the whole burden of humanity while the Semitic hordes have been the parasites fattening on the labors of their nobler Germanic-Celtic producers. Ignoble envy, base passion are the inspiration of the modern as they were of the old Haman's. But being veiled behind a cloud of hazy would-be scientific notions, the motive of the modern is less plain than was that of the older; and his method is all the more dangerous.

In this situation, what becomes our duty? Those of you who have been regularly among my hearers

will anticipate my answer. I must again expose myself to being charged with repeating myself. But I am not Shakespeare. Nor am I rich. Shakespeare, I know, never repeats, and rich merchants, I must believe, are always original. That, at least, I learned from a play I recently attended while in New York. The central personage on the stage is a multimillionaire whose only argument is, "I am rich." On the score of his wealth, he presumes to be competent to do anything, and to be exalted above all the conventionalities and limitations that bind common clay. Upon the theory of this play I presume that one who is rich is never under the necessity of repeating himself. The wealthy are always original. But as I am neither rich nor Shakespeare, I must occasionally repeat; and to-day I shall repeat a very familiar contention of mine: In the face of this new racial conceit we Jews must have a double care not to fall into the error of our enemies. There has been Semitism as obnoxious as ever was Aryanism. This Semitism has found voice in Synogogue, and in Jewish circles at times in a pitch that goes far to explain and to excuse the extravagances of counter Aryanism. The Jew has been invoked time in and time out, in season and out of season, as the most wonderful type of humanity; and that not on the ground that he was gifted with mentality, or had been disciplined to keener morality; not because his history marked him a hero—these lines if at all were urged so faintly as to become imperceptible in the picture. But with all the greater stress was the "pure blood" of the Jew brought forward. Whatever distinction was credited or claimed revolved around the purity of the race to which all other excellencies were held secondary, if not regarded as consequences thereof. Hence the appeal ever iterated and

urgent to guard at all hazard this precious unequaled purity of the stock. Hence the cry against inter-marriage. Hence on the part of men and women who habitually sneer at Synagogue, and professedly are beyond the highest outlooks of Israel's religion, the strongest opposition to any step that might tend in the direction of rendering the purity of this exceptional blood less intense than their racial conceit imagines it is. As long as the Jew prates about his blood, as long as the Jew refers to his race, to the neglect of the spiritual elements involved in Jewish birth, he cannot be surprised that the larger world takes up the challenge and answers his boast with a still more emphatic declaration that Semitic blood is not of as fine a composition and preordained to as effective a potency as is that throbbing in the blue veins of a true and uncontaminated Aryan.

Racial chauvinism is the foam cresting the wave of modern naturalism. Grant that man is only a brute, then the quality of his blood determines his rank. This inevitably leads to conflicting claims. Pot would not be quite as black as Kettle, while Kettle would pass for a nobler aristocrat than Pot. Houston Stewart Chamberlain in sober truth is giving Semitic Chauvinists a Roland for their Oliver. Semitic presumption necessarily arouses Aryan pretentions. In the presence of this rampant racialism, modesty befits the Jew. A truce in the midst of Jewry to all high flown declamations about the Jewish blood!

But if this racialism is the main source whence prejudice flows forth a turbulent and turbid tide; if it is the arsenal where to-day hatred finds stacked its pointed and poisoned spears; the older jargon of distrust has not been forgotten and often its

venomous vocabulary may be heard in high and low places. Nationalism is the name of this older sister of modern racialism. The Jew constitutes a distinct nation. This has been the cry throughout the circling ages. It is still the fond conviction of the Drumont's, the Stoecker's of modern days, as it was the artfully worded plea of their prototype, the Haman of our story. In the verse that we read the grand vizier requests the king to give him power over the Jews, on the ground that they constitute a people scattered throughout the vast provinces of the realm, whom the monarch might well exterminate without risk of loss to himself as they refuse to recognize the royal authority living apart from his other subjects and obeying laws of their own.

Now, it cannot be doubted that at one time the Jews were a nation. But their political nationality came to an end when the state and temple fell. Certainly when Bar Kokba's rise against Hadrian was quenched in a torrent of martyr blood. I am within the bounds of truth when I say that with the crushing of this last rebellion against Rome and fate, Jewish political nationality changed from being an actual fact into a potential hope, sustaining perhaps the people in the dispersion by a ray of light recalling departed glory in the vision of future restoration. And this vision took on all the intenser glow because the nations would not admit into their nationality the scattered members of the extinct Jewish political nationality. In liberal pulpits, the story is popular which puts the blame on the Jew that the process of assimilation has been retarded, as it was he that refused to plunge into the mightier current of national life flooding and flowing round about him. This view is a wanton perversion

of the actual facts. The Jews long before their state had tumbled had made the honest effort in certain sections of the world to sink their political nationality into the mightier stream of the national life by which they were surrounded. Greek Judaism had arisen even when the temple was still standing. The Jews in Alexandria had become so thoroughly Greek that for them Hebrew idioms and the concepts expressed by them had almost lost intelligibility. They were Greeks in custom, Greeks in sympathy, Greeks in ambition. The only line of cleavage between them and their Greek neighbors was religion. If in the medieval days the Jews did not follow this example, theirs is not to blame. Medieval society pretended to rest on the pillars of the Christian church. This position of necessity barred out the non-Christian. The Jew had to be excluded; he had to be crowded back; he was forced to become an empire within the empire, a society within society. The Ghetto arose with all that implies; but it was not the Jew who primarily enclosed it with impassable walls.

Perhaps one modification must be made. There was an element in Jewish thought that made for meeting half way this intention of medieval society. Talmudism erected its bulwarks; the Talmudic scheme fortified the ramparts. It drew the line between the Jew and the non-Jew effectively. But this Talmudism, upon closer inspection, will reveal itself largely influenced by the tendencies without Judaism. It was devised for defense, rather than for defiance. It preserved because the world plotted to destroy Judaism. The distinction must be kept in mind between disappearance and assimilation. To destroy the Jew and silence his spiritual message was indeed the ambition of the medieval church and state. This conspiracy the Jew had to resist and thwart, for

the sake of the spiritual protest which it was his to point; and Talmudism served this purpose, though incidentally it culminated in a rigid system of segregation assumed by the Jew. Exclusion was necessary if Judaism was to be preserved in the conditions then prevailing. But when the nineteenth century dawned the Jew himself hastened to lay low the walls; it was the Jew, in Germany, in France, in England, that insisted upon being recognized as one of this modern political nation. The modern nations after the French and American revolutions emancipated themselves from the thought that credal religion was their fundamental support. The modern nations are not Christian in the technical sense of the world; therefore, they do not by sheer logic exclude the non-Christian, be he Jew, Mohammedan, Buddist, Agnostic, or atheist. The moment the world had weaned itself of the medieval conceit the Jew made ready to step out of his segregation. He was certain that political Jewish nationalism was an anachronism. Under this conviction, he demanded his rights as a citizen of the new states. The outcome of this agitation was the gradual emancipation, as it is called, of the Jews in modern Europe. The recognition of the right of the Jew to citizenship, with all that it implies, was from the very first regarded as axiomatic in our own dearly beloved America.

Modern nationalism, however, has been at work to undo what Riesser and his yokemates achieved. The nationalism of the medieval days was religious in texture. The new nationalism is not religious, it is racial. Its cry is; France for the French; Germany for the Germans; America for the Americans But who is French? Who German? Who American? In France, in Germany, they reason that race and nation are ex-

changeable terms. Therefore the German nationalists in theory identify German with and limit its scope to Teuton, though if the test were applied to the German people of to-day, very few would be found to square with the restrictive definition. Though Treitzschke and others have done their best to spread the erroneous theory, the German nation is not Teutonic. The Teutonic by no means is numerically the preponderating element. Still the theory served to cloak in patriotic guise the desire to expel the Jew. Here was semblance of justification for the insistence that a Jew cannot be a German; a Jew cannot be a true Frenchman.

What in the presence of this prejudice against the Jew, a prejudice based upon modern nationalism, is the duty of the Jew? I for my part do not scruple to declare it to be our all the more sacred obligation to reject the specious theory. Jewish nationalism adopts the fundamental contention and is therefore, a dangerous indulgence to be guarded against.

The saddest feature is that the Jew has himself caught the infection. The Jew has himself been led astray by the glittering generalities of nationalism; and we have been blessed by a renaissance of Jewish nationalism, vulgarly known as Zionism. If that movement were merely a concerted attempt to ease the fate and lot of the Russian, Roumanian, or Galician Jews, none of us could object. But it spurns to be philanthropic. It pretends to stand for the consummation of the Jewish destiny. It is based upon the assumption that the Jew to be Jew must belong to the Jewish nation. So great has been the fatal influence of this doctrine that men who thirty years ago were in the lead of those that insisted upon the de-nationalization of Judaism, to-day have become enthusiastic, fanatical adher-

ents and advocates of Zionism even in America. The only excuse for this is the desperate disillusioning that has come upon humanity, and upon the Jew; the universal despair of ideals. This Jewish nationalism is the acknowledgment that all our hopes and all our visions of a humanity based upon other elements than force, are chimerical. The Jew must not fall into the error of the nationalistic anti-Semite. We can understand the motives of a young German Jew if he heeds the call of the Zionists, for in Germany, contrary to law and to constitution, he is after all only a German by tolerance, a German deprived of certain privileges, while every obligation is laid on him. He is not permitted to become a commissioned officer of the army whether in the active service or in the reserve ranks. The judiciary career is but rarely open to him; if he prepares himself for an academic profession he finds the possibilities few, no matter what his excellence might be. Everywhere he rushes up against a dead wall, on the stones of which he finds written: "A Jew is only a German conditionally; not a full German." And yet these young Jewish Germans crave the full measure of national life. They are burning with the fever of patriotism which demands satisfaction and is refused opportunity. As Germany seems to deny them the full and free scope it is but natural though it is sad that they turn to the East, and under the spell of a vision grand and noble, believe that there lies the national destiny of the Jew, and there the field for patriotic culture. But here in America we have even not this dim shadow of an excuse. There is no call for Zionism in America, except that Zionism which is under the consecration of philanthropy, and would help the millions of Jews in Russia to a better future, to a

nobler opportunity to lead a decent life. Political Zionism is absolutely insufferable in America. Have we not a nation? We have one. Let those that deny this weigh their words. They ought to be ashamed of their argument, that even in America the Jew is only a second class citizen. What of it if we have social arrogance to meet? What of it if our sons are not eligible for the secret college fraternities? What of it if some snobs pretending to greater culture would look down upon us as not worthy of associating with them? I am conceited enough to believe that he who holds me unworthy of association with him is not worthy of association with me. Where I am excluded, the distinction of the exclusion is mine. It is the coward that whines; it is the fool that complains. What of it? Think of it! If Jesus, their Savior, as they call him, were to visit them, he would have to be excluded from their hotels and clubs, for he was a Jew. If St. Paul was to reappear on earth, St. Paul, whose words their pulpits reiterate as the foundation of their creed, he could not register in a hotel that does not cater to Hebrew patronage. The best men would be excluded, and the purest women, better men and purer women than are among the would-be nobility of anti-Semitic conceits.

The fact is the Jew in America has a nation. And in saying this I do not refer to the fact that once in a while a professional Hebrew is put on a polyglot political ticket, that one of my race, "a Hebrew statesman," or one of my religion is nominated for some office or other. In saying that we Jews in America have no excuse for Zionism, I do not even refer to the fact that in our Senate Jews have sat; as even now one whose father was a member of my first congregation in Baltimore has been elected Senator of

the great State of Maryland, a man who while religiously no longer in association with the Jews, has never tried to evade the circumstance that he is to all intents and purposes a Jew, one who has never allowed any one to throw slurs upon the character of the Jew without challenging him to substantiate the charge by evidence that could not be disputed. Even if we had not a single Senator of Hebrew birth, if we had not a single representative in Congress of Jewish origin, even if we had not a single constable, or something of that sort in this city or elsewhere to our credit, if at election time none would approach us and say, "Run for office," and if you run you get the Jewish vote and my support," if none of the party managers would believe, and they should not believe it, the story of the artful deceiver who tells them to nominate this or that "Hebrew" because the nomination will fetch the "Jewish vote;" if none of the party managers ever advertised in our Jewish papers so-called, my own included, still I should say the Jew in America has no right to pretend that he has no nationality. We have a nationality, it is the American. Let us be careful not to blur this truth. We are often careless in speech. We sometimes speak of Americans as though we were not Americans. How often have I been told "Doctor, we were proud of you to-day. You had many Americans in the audience." As a rule, I have only Americans in my audience. You are Americans. I am an American. Let us wean ourselves of this loose, slipshod expression which admits what is untrue, and what the Jew should not admit in this country. Mordecai in the novel is a patriotic Jew. He saves the king's life; he renders the state a great service. Confronted by the prejudice invoked by racial nationalism, it is the Jew's highest

duty to emphasize that as a Jew he has no distinct Jewish nationality.

Let us then carry home the consciousness and into our very ambition the conviction that in the presence of Aryan racialism, which is brutalism gone to seed, the Jews must have a care not to fall a prey to semitic arrogance. In the face of brutalizing non-Jewish nationalism the Jew of America, at least, need not fear. His nation is none other than that over which waves—may God grant that it wave forever—the Star Spangled Banner of Liberty, Justice and Law. Modern Hamans have made the story of Esther vital again. Esther may never have lived. I have no doubt, and I do not hesitate to say so, that the Book belongs to fiction. It is a novel, but like many a novel it puts truth much more strongly than ever reality could express it. A real Haman, who lived once and died then, what he to us? A real Esther, that was once Queen and then died, what she to us? A real Mordecai, that once sat at the Queen's gate, that once refused to bow to Haman, and once brought upon all the Jews the recoil of his stubborn refusal to show common courtesy; a real Mordecai who once became the successor of the dethroned favorite of the King, what he to us? The Book of Esther is so deeply pathetic and so eternally interesting because it speaks of tendencies and illustrates motives which never localized here and there, alas, have been universal, and are modern to-day. But the hour has grown late. I must leave for another occasion the analysis of the two other counts in the bill of indictment drawn by our enemies. That our morality is inferior and our religion the parent of our inferior morality, is among their claims. This accusation is as baseless as are the other charges.

I had hoped when a young man that the day would come when in a Reform Congregation the Purim feast might be ignored. But that day has alas, not yet dawned. Yet is the world full of the venom of Haman; yet is the world full of weak men of the stamp and character of Ahasuerus; yet is the world in need of the services of Esther, and of Mordecai. And because that need is pressing, the story and the feast have place even in the scheme of this radical Jewish Reform Congregation. Might Purim bring to you joy, but also the deeper appeal to meditate and ponder, to reflect and to resolve. Prejudice cannot be fought with prejudice, but it can be met by courage; it can be defeated by love. When they hate, let us love; when they misjudge, let us be careful to judge truthfully. When they invoke brutal convictions, let our souls be under the consecration of a higher and nobler faith. Amen.

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